
OAS Head Faces Wave of Criticism Over Polemic Against Venezuela

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The countries that form the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America, known as ALBA, sharply condemned Luis Almagro, secretary-general of the Organization of American States, over his ongoing polemic against Venezuela.

In a statement published Thursday, the leftist bloc of countries said that they “categorically reject” Almagro's statements and the “systematic aggressions” being levied by him against Venezuela.

The head of the Organization of American States, or OAS, has taken an increasingly interventionist position with respect to Venezuela, recently [penning a tirade](#) against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.

“Mr. Almagro endorsed the agenda of the Venezuelan political opposition and allowed the General Secretariat of the OAS to serve as shelter to its most radical and violent sector,” read the ALBA statement, which also expressed its solidarity with Maduro.

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Ecuador, a member of the ALBA bloc, took such great exception to Almagro's letter that the country's foreign ministry even suggested he could be removed from his post for stepping out of line.

The OAS has strict rules prohibiting its secretary-general adopting a political stance as Almagro did toward Venezuela.

Venezuela's representative to the OAS called on other countries in the hemisphere to hold Almagro responsible for his actions, saying he has “totally lost his sanity.”

“This ongoing show is unfortunate. All countries of the OAS should divorce themselves from his unusual behavior,”

said Venezuela OAS Ambassador Jorge Valero.

The conflict with Almagro comes amid rising political tensions in Venezuela as the opposition continues to push for faster progress toward a recall referendum on whether to remove Maduro from office.

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Delcy Rodriguez previously condemned efforts by the country's opposition to use the OAS to interfere in the domestic affairs of Venezuela, and instead called for the regional body to [fulfill its role](#) as a place for dialogue.

Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa has argued that the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, known as CELAC, should replace the OAS as the primary regional integration and dispute-settlement body due to the OAS' tendency to promote U.S. interests over regional priorities.
